



# CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

VOL. IV.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1853.

NO. 18.

## CRIME IN ENGLAND.

(From the Galway Vindicator of Nov. 24.)

The contrast between the moral state of Ireland and England, just now, is remarkable. The Irish papers, for the past week, have not been drawing a picture of fancied tranquillity, or of a social order that was merely poetical. The criminal statistics of the country demonstrate a fact. Crime, agrarian or political, is scarcely known, from Belfast to Waterford.—Especially those crimes from which human nature revolts—cold-blooded murders, accompanied by every species of atrocity that could be dictated by venality or vengeance, by lust or licentiousness. But whilst we congratulate ourselves on this state of things, which shows the national character in so favorable a light, the "sister" country is steeped to the lips in a social criminality that, to a stranger who looks on her vast resources and seemingly inexhaustible powers, is the greatest mystery of the age.

For the past four weeks, murders most foul and unnatural have been perpetrated. Four murders have succeeded each other in bloody succession, each rivaling the other in features of dreadful criminality. The first was that of a young woman who was slain by a poker, and whilst the body might yet have retained some lingering pulsations, then had coals of burning fire heaped upon her bleeding person. The second was that of an aged grandmother, tottering on the verge of eternity, putting to death the child of her daughter. The third was that of a young girl whose throat was cut, and her body mutilated by a miscreant whose motives are not known. The fourth happened on Friday last. The victim was a jeweller who resided in Norwich. He was robbed and murdered. "His head," says the report, "had been nearly severed from the body by a blow at the back of the neck, and there were four deeply cut wounds across the temples and face, any one of which would have caused death. The right eye was also driven inwards to the depth of nearly an inch. Indeed, the man appeared to have been felled like an ox." We quote those four murders in four weeks, because they were marked by characteristics of peculiar horror. We do not speak of the murderous assaults which have occurred, during the same period, in which many of the victims escaped death by some Providential interference, because these are matters of daily occurrence. In fact, the immorality of England is like a huge spreading leprosy. Religion, legislation, and the church, administer in vain to a disease so wide spread and deep sunk. We speak from what the records of the day supply. Wife-killing, incest, of a description to make one pale with horror, the disruption of all conjugal ties, the desecration of everything that is sacred in homes—brutalities of man to man that indicate an irreclaimable wickedness—these are the awful adjuncts to murders perpetrated coolly, deliberately, and for the smallest amount of mere gain. What have we besides those? Consols are above Christianity. There is no faith but in the funds. The Scriptures are the Stock Exchange. The money changers are in the Temple.—The cure of souls is in the hands of the auctioneer. There are Bishops, but no church; and so, ignorance, infidelity and crime, overshadow the land.

"The cruelty of husbands to wives," says the *Morning Post* of Monday, "has become so common as almost to escape one's notice, while the matrimonial infidelity of both hourly presses itself on public attention." And the writer goes on to suggest some remedy for so terrible an evil, both in high and low life. "Possibly, (here is the suggestion) if this offence were made criminal, legally, it might do great good in the middle and lower classes, and no harm, certainly, in the higher."

But, before we notice another remedy started for the cure of national immorality in England, we shall borrow the authority of a couple of parties who cannot be supposed to be biased on a question that an Irish journalist might possibly exaggerate. Of course the irreligiousness of England is at the root of her criminality. But how could the population be other than irreligious, when the great instrument of their teaching merits this description from Douglas Jerrold, a sharp and shrewd observer of England and English human nature:—"The poor man's church!" he says, "cross the threshold and enter it. Why, poverty is stigmatised, set apart; a thing of shame, on stools. Respectability is snug in a pew, and kept from the taint of poor backsliders on benches, glibly confesses herself a miserable sinner! Could the Apostles, in their old-world attire, enter a London church, the headle, with a big look, would waive them from the pews, and motion them down upon the benches. And the Apostles would sit there, pitying the sleek pluralist in the pulpit, to whom even Jacob's ladder has its rungs encased with purple velvet to make the footing softer; and leaving the church, might haply pause to look sorrowfully at the preacher's satin-coated chesnuts pawing at the door.

And poor men feel and see these things; and feel and see the mockery of them, and so they withdraw from the Established Church, and backslide into dissent. Men who do not believe in the apostolic necessity of £10,000 per annum, are heretics. Religion is best dignified when the Bankers book is bound up with the Bible.—Of late the Church has been busy in Parliament. Bishops are in Parliament. But when do we hear them? Are their voices upraised to deprecate the sinfulness, the ruthlessness of war? Do they ever make themselves the advocates of the oppressed and the down-trodden? Are they, in that assembly of Lords, the honey-tongued moderators—ever taking the side of charity and good will—and preaching tolerance in the small still voice of universal humanity? Why no: when Bishops gird themselves for a debate it is a wordy war for property—Church property. Some spoiliations in the name of law or custom, at the cost of common sense or piety, is to be defended. Some plurality, some old, time honored abuse, so grown upon, and into, the Church, that to touch it is to desecrate the holiness of the religion whereof that Church, with all its pluralities, is the holy temple. For the Christianity of the Established Church has become a torpid thing; a thing of outward signs and ceremonies; and is no longer a vital, soul-awakening, soul-solacing, truth. *Episcopacy is choked with fat!* What know our Bishops of the poor? But the poor know of the Bishops. They know of their external wealth, they read and know of their higgling and dealing, and they know that, for the divine purpose of Christianity, as manifested for the spiritual comforting of all men, the Christianity of the Established Church is not a working-day-truth. It is a business—not an inspiration."

A few weeks since, the great English organ of opinion, thus dwelt on "painfully ridiculous" spectacle to be viewed on Sunday in London:—

"We have in this metropolis, and in our own neighborhood," says the *Times*, "a spectacle more painfully ridiculous and a greater violation of common sense than is to be found in any human institution in the most backward and unimprovable countries. Here are scores of churches—handsome churches, with everything that money can give them, in admirable order with well-conducted services, and no congregations. The model city church is a spacious, and, indeed, a magnificent structure, with nave, aisles, chancel, vestibule, vestry tower, bells and the rest. Once in three or four years it is closed for a month to be repaired and cleaned, and fitted with a new warming apparatus, at a great cost. All its new furniture is excellent; there is nothing wanting that comfort and a certain quiet civic taste can desire. It has the services of a well-paid clergyman, a well-paid clerk, a well-paid organist, paid singers, band, sexton, and pew-openers. The bells ring for a morning service on Sunday, and at eleven o'clock it begins. Count the congregation any time between eleven and one; include the minister, clerk, band, pew-opener, organist, the half-dozen school children—in a word, count every soul in the place, taking good care not to omit yourself, and you will find, perhaps, forty. We have made the reckoning many in one handsome church, without exceeding that limit. In a larger and handsomer church, in a well-known street, on a fine Sunday morning, we have made out twenty souls. The average in a considerable number of such churches is said to be fifty. In each of these churches the expenses, including the clergyman's income, and tridental repairs, and every other item, are considerably over £500 a-year, or £10 per head of the actual congregation."

This being the state of the English Church, the demoralised condition of the people is a necessary consequence. And this state of things must go on until the population be Christianised. It is quite clear that the Church of the Reformation has been a dead failure; it is also evident that Dissent, in all its ramifications, has not been able to remedy the evil. The State Church will not reform itself. Nobody is insane enough to believe that there is as much self-denial amongst Bishops as would induce them to renounce an amount of worldly wealth that is both enormous and marvellous.

But still attempts must be made to teach the brutalised millions. Some of those attempts are funny enough. A few days ago, the scheme of Lord Shaftesbury was to distribute lay preachers all over the country, thus repealing the parsons altogether.—The last scheme in the market we find noticed in the *Morning Post* of Monday. The idea is certainly a most original one—it is nothing more or less than the erection of "Ragged Churches!" where the poor, the depraved, the wretched and the ragged may find admission."

It is come out at last to this acknowledgment, that poverty is an inexpiable sin in Christian England.—We thought there were two spots in this earthly world where all distinctions were levelled—the church and the grave. In all other countries, when men kneel in prayer in Christian temples, human vanities are forgotten, and the pride of place, of rank, or wealth sinks into the nothingness from whence it sprung. It remained for free America and Protestant England to teach us a new lesson. The Christian negro dare not bring the abomination of his person in contact with a privileged white, who is great in the sanctity of dollars; and the poor man or woman in England must not dare in future to bring their "raggedness" between the wind and the nobility of rich and orthodox saints, who worship with white cambric and rich gilt prayer books.

## THE CIOCCI CASE—WHICH APOSTATE WINS?

(From the Tablet of Nov. 26.)

Our Anglican and other Protestant friends really place us under peculiar difficulty by "the conversions" they effect from our ranks. If the conduct of the apostates whom they pick up and parade on the Exeter Hall boards, and to whom they entrust the instruction of their daughters, were reported as only moderately wicked, we might not hesitate to speak of it, and to make that use of it in argument which controversy requires. But their profligacy, as given in evidence, is so utterly sickening, that one is obliged to take refuge in silence.

There was Achilli for instance. If it had merely come out, as was the case in poor Blanco White's biography, that in the course of his life he had for a time given way to immorality, but had, nevertheless, preserved something as nearly approaching to respectability as possible with that sort of life, we should have felt less embarrassment in showing up the affair. A paper which is read by the young, the innocent, and the holy, is obliged to forbear, even in the cause of truth, the exhibition of profligacy in its unveiled deformity.

If the public must at last be made acquainted with it, the evidence has to be dressed up in general terms and with great care, to be fit to be at all presented to the reader. Such a case is that with which the papers are now crowding their columns, and which, in some of its features, one might almost say surpassed that of Achilli himself. Plato, in his "Republic" if we recollect right, says that if there were a competition among mankind which should be most wicked, it would be as difficult to get the prize for the greatest degree of sin, as it would be for the highest perfection of goodness. These apostate gentlemen would seem to be running such a race as the philosopher imagined, and truly it is difficult to adjust the palm among them.

The judgment in this affair of Ciocci is not as yet before us; therefore we shall merely give a statement of the facts on evidence, worded in such a manner as to avoid needlessly sully these pages. We remember hearing of this man several years ago, and a silly book, in which, like the rest of the crew, he pretended to relate, for the edification of his deluded patrons, the circumstances of his apostasy. He was then a mere youth, and the only impression we derived from the book was that it was about the most trashy, contemptible, lying production we had ever read of that kind. A good, sound whipping, and not an article in a newspaper to feed his vanity, would have been the proper recompense for such a wretched creature. However, we all know the Protestant public are ready to swallow anything, no matter how repulsive, that come to them in the shape of apostasy. The experiment appears to have succeeded. Raffaele Ciocci was patronised. He became a teacher of languages at Brighton, and had engagements to teach in no fewer than twenty ladies' schools. Not only did Evangelicals but even Anglicans patronise him, for he was employed by "the Society of Christian Knowledge," which, as is well known, the Puseyites support, to translate "Jewell's Apology" into Italian! Those of our readers who remember the case of the Abbate di Col, commented on nearly a year ago in the *Tablet*, will recollect that this was one of the controversial works the Anglicans were sending to Genoa, to assist the supposed Italian Church by which they were so cruelly hoaxed.

We should certainly pity honest men whose simplicity exposes them to deception; but we cannot regard with similar feelings that simplicity which arises from the blindness of determined bigotry. Enough has surely been said and done to open the eyes of all but the wilfully blind to the real character of apostates, and of all revolt from the Catholic Church. But to return to Signor Raffaele Ciocci. The youth, making his way at Brighton, succeeded in gaining the affections of a lady, considerably older than himself, and possessed of a fortune of £40,000. The poor, unhappy lady married Ciocci on Jan. 15th, 1851, they separated on the 14th of March following, and she now brings an action against him for divorce by reason of cruelty and adultery!

We have prepared the reader for something peculiarly shocking in the case. The facts, as given in evidence, scarcely, indeed, admit of being placed before our readers. They, however, come to this, that Ciocci, at the time of his marriage, was laboring under illness at once the consequence and the proof of immorality; that he was aware of this; but, in spite of warning contracted the marriage, and imparted to his poor victim the consequences of his sin; that ever since his marriage he was in the habit of cohabiting with women of abandoned character; had frequented houses of ill-fame; had been an habitual adulterer.

From the evidence given on these heads it seems that Ciocci was a friend of Achilli's, and that they and another worthy of the same class, named Guadaleta, had even resided together. One of the women, Jane Legg, whose name will be recollected in the Achilli trial, gave evidence in this against Ciocci. It was further alleged that, independent of immorality, Ciocci had treated his wife with neglect and unkindness—nay, that even on the wedding-day, when they went to London, he had absented himself for hours, and only returned to her late in the evening.

After they had been married two months, the ill-fated lady left him, and went to Cuckfield, in Sussex, as she informed him, for the benefit of her health, but refused afterwards to return. Since then she had, as it appears, hid herself, keeping her residence carefully concealed, until she commenced the present action.

The following is a specimen from a letter which Ciocci wrote to his wife during their separation, and which was read by his own counsel "in proof of the manner in which he had behaved towards his wife."

Take counsel with your former declarations and promises, with your reason and with your heart, and if they tell you (as I think they will) that duty calls you home again, come, and I will do all I can for your happiness, both of us remembering, however, that perfect happiness is not for earth—that those who are called happy have often need of the virtue of resignation. If you persist in a resolution which is not yours, but with which you have been maliciously inspired, the public shall hear my voice also, and so much the louder because I have warned you of it. You know that the law would assist me, and you know also that when I have entered upon a course I am accustomed to persevere in it.

Signor Ciocci's defence, like Achilli's, consists, as to the main charge, in a flat denial. He swore, in opposition to the evidence of two medical men, that he was not laboring under the illness referred to, at the time, nor after his marriage. And he defended himself against the accusation of adultery, in one case, by stating that he was a member of the Society for the Protection of Females in Red Lion-square, and that he had spoken to the female in question, but only to induce her to alter her state of life; that he had seen one of his countrymen, the above-mentioned Guadaleta, who at the time was a candidate for the office of Minister of the Italian Protestant Church in Newman-street, talking to this woman, as he suspected, for an improper purpose; that he had represented this to two Anglican Ministers who were concerned in the appointment, and that in consequence he had taken the woman to a police-station to be sworn as to the evidence she gave against Guadaleta; that the magistrate refused to interfere, and that he had then taken the girl back in his cab, as far as it went her way, and returned alone to his lodgings.

The defence set up in the other special charges of adultery consisted, as regarded the second, a woman named Thomas, that she had committed perjury, having varied in an after statement from the examination-in-chief; as regarded the third, named Miller, that one of the witnesses was a common prostitute, and that the other was mistaken as to his identity.

It happens from the nature of the proceedings in the Ecclesiastical Court, where the depositions are taken in writing, that we are obliged to gather the evidence merely from the abstracts of the speeches of counsel on both sides, and not from regular reports as in other trials. This is of the less consequence, as it is to us, controversially speaking, of not the smallest importance whether Ciocci is guilty of the crimes laid to his charge or not. The general character of apostates is by this time pretty well known, and in the present case, even if the largest concessions and abatement were made for defect of evidence, and if reliance as unbounded were to be placed on Ciocci's oath of denial as was placed upon that of his friend Dr. Achilli, still Ciocci's own evidence as to Guadaleta would show the sort of men these Italian apostates are. We have never heard of this Guadaleta, and yet it turns out that he was sufficiently favored by the Exeter Hall gentlemen to be putting up for the ministry of an Italian Protestant church, and at the same time that he was leading a profligate life.

We observe in to-day's (Nov. 24) *Times* a letter from the secretary of "The Female Aid Society," denying that Ciocci was ever officially connected with that institution, but declaring that "so far as he was cognisant of Signor Ciocci's humane efforts to reclaim fallen women, he is a man of benevolent intentions, and actuated by pure and honest motives." We may here add that there is an evident inclination to take Achilli again into favor. Dr. Addams, on behalf of Ciocci, indignantly repudiated any slur as against his client for being associated with Achilli. "Why, Dr. Achilli stood justified by a jury of his own country as a person not open to the imputation